

Testimony of Mr. Thomas M. Conaway

Managing Partner Homeland Security

Unisys Corporation

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Protection

“Managing Risk and Increasing Efficiency: An Examination of the  
Implementation of the Registered Traveler Program”

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311 Cannon House Office Building

Good afternoon Chairwoman Jackson-Lee, Ranking Member Lungren, and other distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. I am Tom Conaway, Managing Partner for Homeland Security at Unisys Corporation. We thank you for inviting Unisys to participate in this hearing focusing on the implementation of the Registered Traveler Program.

Unisys is a global corporation of 37,000 employees in over 100 countries providing information systems solutions and services to a wide range of private and public sector customers. We are a publicly-traded corporation with annual revenues in excess of \$5B. We are a U.S. company with our headquarters in Bluebell, Pennsylvania. And we have a long and proud history of serving our federal government.

Around the world and here at home, Unisys is a leading provider of integrated security solutions – many of which incorporate advanced biometric and identity management technologies. For example, we delivered a system to the Chilean Border Police that screens individuals arriving at airports against Interpol watch-lists based on facial recognition. We delivered a national identification card for Malaysia that employs fingerprint identification. Recently, we have been tasked by Australia, New Zealand, and Canada to test a variety of technologies to control land, sea, and air borders.

Here at home, we have worked on a number of initiatives aimed at securing our homeland and have worked directly with the Department of Homeland Security since its creation. As examples, we designed, developed and implemented in record time the initial exit-tracking capability for the US VISIT program. At Customs and Border Protection, we support the development and maintenance of mission critical software applications like the Free and Secure Trade System and the Automated Targeting System. We are also working on the Secure Border Initiative as a member of the Boeing-led SBInet team. At the Transportation Security Administration, Unisys currently provides a wide range of information technology operations and maintenance support. Additionally, we have also supported such programs as the Airport Access Control Pilot Projects and, of course, the Registered Traveler Program.

Unisys is proud to have worked with the TSA on Registered Traveler Program from the beginning. In June 2004, TSA selected Unisys to develop and operate three of the initial five pilot sites to demonstrate the utility of the Registered Traveler concept. At those sites, Unisys tested and analyzed various combinations of technology and techniques. The results gained from those tests supported the ultimate technology decisions TSA made for the program that is being deployed today.

One of the biggest unknowns at the time was the question of whether or not the traveling public would accept the program. The concept of using a biometric - other than a photograph - to verify the identity of an individual seemed more science fiction than reality. Even though there was initial skepticism, survey results of program participants indicated widespread acceptance and support of the concept. So much so, in fact, that TSA extended the program well beyond the originally planned performance period of ninety (90) days per airport.

As the TSA moved forward with the program, it became obvious that, even though it was popular with participants, it would not be economically feasible to implement a national roll-out using federal dollars. Therefore, a commercial model was created and piloted to demonstrate the viability of a different economic model that was based on subscription fees rather than a central federal budget.

The TSA took the lessons learned from these activities and used them to craft the Registered Program pilot phase that is being deployed today. Under TSA's leadership, what has emerged is a public-private partnership with TSA retaining overall program oversight and the Registered Traveler Interoperability Consortium (RTIC) providing a central voice for airport and industry participation. Working together, this partnership has resulted in a technical interoperability specification that requires all certified RT vendors to produce and issue credentials and readers that allow program participants to travel seamlessly between participating airports, regardless of the source of enrollment.

This is similar to you being able to use your ATM card in any teller machine, regardless of the brand of your home bank.

Much progress has been made and today the RT program is operating in at least six airports, with more on the way. The Unisys offering, rtGO, has been operational at the Reno-Tahoe airport since the end of May, and our customers are anxious to see the program expand.

Yet, with all this progress, several challenges remain. Some of these are routine “growing pains” associated with the roll-out of any new program. Others will require more thought and effort to resolve. This latter category includes the concepts such as: an interoperability transfer fee to be paid between the RT provider companies; the introduction of new screening technologies into the passenger screening lane; and the provision of benefits - such as not having to remove a laptop from a carry-on, or being able to leave shoes and jacket on - from the TSA.

Even though these challenges exist, the history of the program has shown that we will work through them. To that end, Unisys looks forward to working with the TSA, the RTIC, and the other RT providers to make this public-private partnership a reality.